

Message Text

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65/14

ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 SS-15 OPR-02 A-01 /045 W

----- 098758

R 191515Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2987

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0234

(C O R R E C T E D COPY TEXT PARA A)

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PORG, PFOR

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: LIBYA

REF: STATE 037591

FOLLOWING ARE RESPONSES TO PARAGRAPH 7 IN REFTEL:

A. AS IN THE PAST, LIBYA CAN BE EXPECTED TO TAKE EXTREME ANTI-U.S., ANTI-ISRAEL, AND PRO-PALESTINIAN POSITION IN MULTILATERAL GODIES, AND TO TRY TO INJECT MIDDLE EAST POLITICS INTO EVERY CONCEIVABLE ISSUE. LIBYA WILL DO ITS BEST TO OUTDO EVEN THE MOST RADICAL AFRICAN AND ARAB STATES IN ANTI-COLONIAL AND ANTI-WESTERN EXTREMISM, WITHOUT MUCH IF ANY REGARD TO THE MERITS OR THE FACTS OF THE QUESTION. WITHIN THE GROUP OF 77, LIBYAN REPRESENTATIVES WILL PREFER CONFRONTATION TO COMPROMISE, AND WILL BE COMPULSIVELY SUSPICIOUS OF WESTERN, AND ESPECIALLY U.S., MOTIVES.

ONE LIBYAN BATTLE CRY AT THE U.N. WHICH WE CAN EXPECT TO HEAR A GOOD DEAL OF WILL BE OPPOSITION TO THE VETO POWER EXERCISED BY THE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, WHICH LIBYAN CHIEF OF STATE QADHAFI HAS CALLED THE TWENTIETH CENTURY VERSION OF THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS. THIS HOSTILITY TOWARD THE U.N. IN ITS PRESENT FORM IS INFLUENCED BY THE FACT THAT THE STATE OF LIBYA WAS MIDWIFED IN TO EXISTENCE BY THE U.N. , AN INCONVENIENT PIECE OF HISTORY FOR THOSE WHO WOULD

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RATHER THINK OF MODERN LIBYAN HISTORY AS A CONTINUOUS

STRUGGLE AGAINST COLONIALISM

DURING 1975, LIBYA ASSUMED A SEAT ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND BECAME A MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE IAEA. IN 1976, THE LIBYANS WILL BE LOOKING FOR NEW WORLDS TO CONQUER, BUT WE ARE NOT AWARE THAT THEY HAVE ANYTHING SPECIFIC IN MIND AT THE MOMENT.

B. WHILE OPERATING WITHIN THE ARAB BLOC AND THE GROUP OF 77, THE LIBYANS WILL BREAK RANKS WITH THE MAJORITY IN THESE TWO GROUPINGS IF THEY FEEL THAT THE MAJORITY POSITION IS TOO MODERATE, AND THEY WILL GENERALLY PUSH FOR THE MOST EXTREME POSITIONS. ON IMPORTANT VOTES IN MULTILATERAL BODIES INVOLVING MIDEAST POLITICAL ISSUES, THE LIBYANS WILL BE RUTHLESS IN PRESSURING ECONOMICALLY WEAKER STATES, PARTICULARLY FELLOW AFRICAN STATES, TO FOLLOW THEIR LEAD. IN THIS SENSE THEIR INFLUENCE WILL BE FELT. ON THE OTHER HAND, UNWILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE WILL ISOLATE THE LIBYANS ON MANY ISSUES. ON TOPICS OF IMPORTANCE TO THE U.S., LIBYAN HOSTILITY CAN GENERALLY BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED.

C. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW CLOSELY LIBYAN DELEGATIONS ARE INSTRUCTED, BUT BELIEVE, ON THE BASIS OF LIMITED EVIDENCE, THAT THEY TEND TO BE GIVEN BROAD TACTICAL LATITUDE WITHIN FIRMLY FIXED STRATEGIC LIMITS. THUS DELEGATIONS WILL BE TOLD BEFORE DEPARTURE THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN POINTS ON WHICH NO COMPROMISE CAN BE ACCEPTED, BUT IT WILL BE LEFT TO THEM TO CHOOSE THE TACTICS WHICH ARE BEST SUITED TO PRODUCE THE DESIRED RESULT. THERE IS PROBABLY VERY LITTLE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DELEGATIONS IN THE FIELD AND AUTHORITIES IN THE CAPITAL ON MOST MATTERS.

D. MANSUR RASHID KIKHYA, LIBYA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UNITED NATIONS, IS THE ONLY INTERNATIONAL LIBYAN DIPLOMAT OF ANY STATURE. KIKHYA IS A FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER WHO IS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO RETURN TO THE U.N., AND WHO PROBABLY ENJOYS CONSIDERABLE TACTICAL LATITUDE ON MOST ISSUES.

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E. THE PRESENT LIBYAN GOVERNMENT IS DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS OF THE U.S. AND REJECTS ANY NEGOTIATION AND INTERACTION WITH THE U.S. ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES ON PRINCIPLE. THIS HOSTILITY TO THE U.S. RUNS SO DEEP THAT APPROACHES BY THE EMBASSY ON MULTILATERAL MATTERS MAY DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD, IF THEY ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AT ALL. LIBYAN REPRESENTATIVES OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY WILL SOMETIMES BE MORE AMENABLE TO REASON.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ANTIAMERICAN, POLICIES, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TRIPOL00234
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760068-0084
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760232/aaaabcfv.tel
Line Count: 116
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 37591
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <27 JUL 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: LIBYA
TAGS: PORG, PFOR, LY, XX
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006